THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • THURSDAY • DECEMBER 04, 2025 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 24 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianxpress twitter.com/newindianxpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

SPECIALIST TEAM FROM UK EXAMINES AILING KHALEDA ZIA

A four-member UK specialist medical team arrived in Bangladesh on Wednesday to assist in the treatment of the former prime minister

WILL HELP CHART ADVANCED TREATMENT PLAN

The UK specialists led by Dr Richard Beale of King's College London reviewed 80-year-old Zia's condition and assessed the treatment by the local medical team. The foreign doctors will work with the local team to help formulate an advanced treatment plan. Zia was admitted to a private hospital in Dhaka on November 23 with infections of heart and lungs | **P14**

CHIEFS OF THREE FORCES PAY RARE JOINT VISIT

- In a rare joint public visit, the chiefs of Bangladesh's three armed services visited the ailing former prime minister at the hospital
- The interim government directed Army and Air Force helicopters to conduct test landings near the hospital on Thursday as part of a Special Security Force protocol, which it said was for Zia's protection

Three

THE NUMBER OF TIMES ZIA HAS TAKEN OATH AS BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the event in Mangaluru on Wednesday

CM, Venu huddle in M'luru as power struggle heats up

VINCENT D'SOUZA @ Mangaluru

AMID the ongoing tussle over chief minister's post in Karnataka, AICC General Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah shared the stage in Mangaluru on Wednesday during the centenary celebrations of the historic meeting between Mahatma Gandhi and Shree Narayana Guru.

Though the two leaders sat beside each other through the two-hour event at Mangalore University, they barely interacted. Sources said they later held a closed-door meeting at the university's Kaveri Guesthouse. The details of their discussion remain unknown.

Emerging after over an hour, Siddaramaiah told reporters that he did not discuss politics with Venugopal. To questions on Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's visit to Delhi, he said, "Let him go. Who will object to it?" Asked whether he too is planning to travel to Delhi, he replied that he will go if invited and that he had received no such communication so far.

> **There is no confusion among us. Everything is clear, and both leaders have already spoken to each other**
>
> Satish Jarkiholi, PWD Minister

It remained unclear how long Venugopal stayed at the guesthouse, as he was not seen exiting before the chief minister left. He later reportedly departed for Kerala by train.

The event, organised by Mangalore University and Congress MLC BK Hariprasad, was attended by Home Minister G Parameshwara, PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi, Housing Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, Women and Child Welfare Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar and Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, among others. Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar was not on the list of invitees.

Earlier in the day, when Siddaramaiah arrived at Mangaluru Airport, supporters of both him and Shivakumar raised slogans backing their respective leaders. Congress leader Mithun Rai told reporters that Shivakumar played a key role in bringing the party to power in the state and should become CM immediately.

Reacting to the slogan-shouting, PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi said, "There is no use raising such slogans. There is no confusion among us. Everything is clear, and both leaders have already spoken to each other."

EXPRESS READ

12 Maoists, three cops killed in encounter in Chhattisgarh

Bijapur (Chhattisgarh): Twelve Maoists, including a dreaded commander, and three personnel of the District Reserve Guard (DRG), a specialised unit of the state police, were killed in a fierce encounter in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Wednesday. Officials said the anti-Naxal operation is still under way in the district | **P12**

K'taka cabinet likely to give nod to hate speech Bill today

Bengaluru: The state cabinet is likely to approve the Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2025, on Thursday. The Bill proposes to prevent and control hate speech and hate crimes, their negative effects on individuals, groups and societies | **P4**

Rupee breaches 90-mark for the first time

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

THE rupee's freefall deepened on Wednesday, breaching the 90-per-dollar mark for the first time, hitting a new low of 90.29 in the morning trade after opening flat at 89.96. It closed the day's session at an all-time low of 90.15.

Wednesday marks the sixth consecutive day of fall for the rupee as traders bet the subdued trade and portfolio flows will keep Asia's worst performing currency under pressure, while analysts project the next level for rupee at 92-93.

However, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran sought to downplay the currency slide, saying the weakness has had no impact on inflation and the currency will recover in 2026. "Right now, it's not hurting our exports or inflation. I am not losing my sleep over it. If it has to depreciate now probably is the right time," he said at an event in Mumbai.

With Wednesday's fall, the rupee's value eroded 5.7% so far this year, putting it on track for its steepest annual decline since 2022, and making it the worst-performing Asian currency.

The fall also underscores a divergence in the domestic and external macroeconomic position of the nation. While GDP growth has been stronger-than-expected, punitive US tariffs and weak capital flows have piled pressure on the rupee.

"Every day that we do not have a trade deal, the forex demand from trade deficit and outflows keep pushing the dollar, while forex supply is relatively thin and inconsistent," HSBC said in a note. "We had one month of net inflows in October, but without any more trade deal headlines since then, net flows have become flat."

> **Now, it's not hurting exports or inflation. I am not losing my sleep over it**
>
> Anantha Nageswaran

HC sets aside its order sacking 32,000 teachers in West Bengal

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

IN a relief for the Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal ahead of the assembly elections, a division bench of the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday set aside a single-judge order that had cancelled the appointment of 32,000 primary school teachers.

"After being in service for nine years, if they are removed now, there could be an adverse impact on their families," observed the division bench of justices Tapobrata Chakraborty and Reetobroto Kumar Mitra.

"For cancellation of the entire exam, there must be a finding on systemic malice as borne out by the evidence on record. That is not the case," the bench said. It noted service cannot be terminated due to ongoing criminal proceeding.

Following the Teachers' Eligibility Test held in 2014, a total of 42,500 primary school teachers were appointed. The appointments of 32,000 of them were cancelled by a single bench of Justice Abhijit Ganguly over alleged manipulation in the recruitment process. Ganguly is now a BJP MP from Tamluk in East Midnapore.

Massive chaos as over 200 IndiGo flights cancelled

Insiders attribute it to Emirates' hiring spree

LALITHA S @ New Delhi

THOUSANDS of fliers across airports in the country on Wednesday had a harrowing time as crew shortage at IndiGo resulted in cancellation of at least 200 flights besides delaying many others. This was the second consecutive day that IndiGo failed to operate a large number of flights.

A massive recruitment drive by an international airline at Delhi and Mumbai this week is a key reason for it, said multiple sources. IndiGo attributed the disruption to multiple reasons, including unforeseen operational challenges.

The shortage is of both the cockpit and cabin crew, the sources stressed.

At Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport alone, 67 flights were cancelled, of which 37 were departures. Flights to Hyderabad, Mumbai, Kolkata and Srinagar were among those that were nixed.

Over 70 flights were cancelled from Mumbai and Bengaluru airport until Wednesday evening. The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Hyderabad witnessed irate scenes after 13 flights were cancelled to various cities apart from 18 incoming flights.

Airline sources said, "Emirates has been having a recruitment roadshow in Mumbai and Delhi the last two days and IndiGo crew have been making a beeline for it."

An aviation source blamed it on IndiGo mismanagement, which, however, attributed part of the problem to the DGCA's revised Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) that kicked in from November 1.

Later in the day, the DGCA said IndiGo had cancelled 1,232 flights in November, of which 755 were due to the FDTL, adding it is probing the current cancellations. The Federation of Indian Pilots blamed the ongoing disruption on "IndiGo's prolonged and unorthodox lean manpower strategy across departments, particularly in flight operations."

Irate fliers at the Delhi airport | X

142 INDIGO FLIGHTS AFFECTED AT KIA

In all, 142 IndiGo flights were either delayed or cancelled at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA). A majority of the disruptions were attributed to pilots and crew not showing up with the new rostering system coming into effect since last month | **P2**

GOVT BLINKS, ROLLS BACK SANCHAR SAATHI ORDER

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

THE government on Wednesday withdrew its order directing phone makers to pre-install the Sanchar Saathi app, following strong backlash from opposition parties, digital rights activists, and manufacturers including Apple and Google. The reversal came a day after the telecom ministry clarified that the state-run cybersecurity app is not mandatory and that users may activate or deactivate it.

"Given Sanchar Saathi's increasing acceptance, Government has decided not to make the pre-installation mandatory for mobile manufacturers," a statement by the ministry read.

Sources said this is the first time phone makers have been asked to pre-install a government-owned app. The mandate also meant operational difficulties for phone makers.

Earlier in the day, communications minister Jyotiraditya Scindia sought to dispel privacy concerns saying the Sanchar Saathi app neither enables nor allows snooping.

Russia's MAX

Russia is the only country where phone makers need to pre-install a state-run app. MAX, a state-backed messaging service, must be installed by default on all phones and tablets

SERIES GOES TO DECIDER

Virat Kohli scored his 53rd ODI ton but South Africa hunted down 359, the 3rd highest successful chase in the format's history, with Aiden Markram hitting a 100 | PTI/AFP | **P19**

Karnataka Raj Bhavan now Lok Bhavan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

KARNATAKA too joined the growing list of states that have renamed their Raj Bhavans as Lok Bhavans. Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh on Wednesday issued orders to modify and rename Raj Bhavan as Lok Bhavan, following directions from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), issued on November 25, 2025, and after the approval of Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot.

The orders were issued from the office of the special secretary to the governor which stated that instructions had also been sent to the heads of all departments of the state government to change the reference for future correspondence.

Lok Bhavan Officials said the boards with the new name will be displayed by Friday. However, orders for official communication and correspondence have been issued and all other paper work has started.

The MHA has reasoned that the earlier name smacks of colonialism, while renaming reflects on the evolution of Raj Bhavan into Lok Bhavan. This carries forward its commitment to people-centric governance and public participation in programmes and initiatives.

Already, Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Kerala, Assam, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Gujarat and Tripura have changed the names of their Raj Bhavans to Lok Bhavans.

Responsibilities grow with time...
So should your protection.
A pure protection plan that grows with your life's milestones.
PRESENTING
LIC's Bima Kavach
UIN: 512N360V01 | Plan No.: 887
Non-Par, Non-Linked, Life, Individual, Pure Risk Plan
Plan is also available online
• Level or Increasing Sum Assured Options
• Flexible premium payment choices - Single, Regular, or Limited (5, 10, or 15 years)
• Lifetime Risk Cover (up to 100 years)
• Option to enhance life cover at defined life stage events*
*Available only under Level Sum Assured option with Regular Premium payment, for a standard life with age less than or equal to 40 years (Last Birthday).
Download LIC Mobile App
Visit: licindia.in
Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827
Our WhatsApp No. 8976862090 Say 'Hi'
For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch/visit www.licindia.in
Follow us : LIC India Forever | IRDAI Regn No.: 512
BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI or its officials do not involve in any activities of insurance business like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums, refund of amounts. Policyholders or the prospects receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.
LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA
Har Pal Aapke Saath
LIC/R1/2025-26/24/Eng